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## INDIVIDUALISM IN MEDICINE

The recent campaign involving the anti-health measures, brought out clearly certain types of medical minds. No properly informed person had any doubts concerning the pernicious character of the first three proposed amendments and the propriety of the last, but they reacted in different ways.

To those who threw their energies into the effort to protect human life and promote social betterment in this issue, we owe our thanks.

There are those, however, who assumed an attitude of non-resistance. Their belief is that the public has a perfect right to go unvaccinated if it choose so to do. That it will learn through experience the folly of its ways. They hold that a man who employs an uneducated and unsafe vender of cures takes his chances, and deserves what poor treatment he gets.

They think that if the populace can't see the great benefits of animal experimentation let them feel the blight of their stupidity, let them suffer personally and economically. In fact, their policy is that of *laissez-faire*; let everybody have a clear field, and may the best man win. Medical legislation is futile and beneath their dignity. They then assume an academic reserve, and "let George do it."

An analysis of their mental reaction amounts to this: they naively assume that because of their superiority intellectually and culturally the people must select them as their guide, philosopher and friend, in time of trouble, and the quack stands no chance. Now as a matter of experience we know that regardless of culture and social station the sick man and his friends are not good judges of their doctor. They cannot appreciate the fine points of his ability; it is too technical. The

best of them at times will resort to a charlatan with his plausibilities and sophistry; will follow the crowd in its emotional wave against sound health measures, and will pit their misinformed minds against the findings of an exact science.

Progress in medical education and advancement in public health policies, have only been achieved through persistent gentle force and persuasion.

In the face of superstition and enmity we have fought for anatomical dissection, vaccination, quarantine measures, food inspection, animal experimentation and higher medical standards. We have educated the people as we progressed. But no spirit of non-resistance won these triumphs! This Hindu philosophy wins no battles. Great intellectual aloofness and moral superiority did not achieve this. Someone must strive for these gains. Where the doctor, through timidity, laziness or superiority, is not a willing worker for public health, he is unworthy of the support and protection of the great economic combinations of modern life.

## CLINICAL CONGRESS OF SURGEONS

On November 19th and 20th the first annual meeting of the California section of the clinical congress of the American College of Surgeons will convene in San Francisco, with headquarters at the Palace Hotel. During this meeting surgical clinics will be conducted in the various hospitals of the city during the morning hours, and scientific sessions will occupy the afternoons. A meeting open to the public will be held Friday evening, November 19th. All members of the California State Medical Society are cordially invited to attend the scientific sessions, of which detailed notices will appear later.